[Shri Rajiv Gandhi]

from a Reporter in Delhi. So the origin of the report was not Sweden. The origin of the report was Delhi. We managed to trace the Reporter in Delhi. They named the reporter and said that he is their Reporter from Hong Kong who is in Delhi at present. We traced the Reporter and we contacted him and we asked him if he had some further details to give us. First he said that he would give details to us a couple of days later and a couple of days later when he was contacted he said, "I cannot give you any details and I have got no details." Now, when he was asked aout the details, how he found out and when he found out, he said that he had had this information for some time. Then we asked him "if you had this information for some time then why you did not bring it out earlier" because I have seldom heard a Reporter hanging on to such vital information if he has got it. They are worried about some other man getting it and beating them to the press. So we asked him "if you had this information for some time then why you did not publish it earlier" and when we checked we found that he had actually got his visa for entry into India not in April this year but November last year and the date is, subject to correction, I think it was the 12th November. So in the beginning of November he had got the visa and we asked him secifically why now? Because he came to India on the 14th of April and the news story came out on the 16th. He must have given it almost immediately he arrived. So we asked him, why now? He said that because of Fairfax and certain resignations that have taken place, that is why now. Thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, we will go the next item. Mr. Upendra

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE—Functioning of Government owned media.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting to the functioning of the Government-owned media in the context of the need to utilise the media objectively, purposefully and for fulfilment of educational and cultural needs of the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will fix ten minutes for every participant. (*Interruptions*), You will have 15 minutes, opening batsman.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING ((SHRI AJIT PANJA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, an informed educated and enlightened citizenry is the basis of a democratic country like India. The Governmment is fully conscious of the role the official media have to perform in educating and informing the people of the country with a view to galvanising them into a unified force for the socio-cultural-economic advancement of the country.

[The Deputy Chairman in the Chair]

With this in view, the official media are geared up to perform the stupendous task of motivating the people through appropriate publicity campaigns to actively participate in the process of the various developmental activities launched by the Government, Doordarshan and Akashvani enjoy full functional autonomy for production of programmes. The functioning of the media has been specially oriented to

to make the citizens of this country fully conscious of the need to preserve national intergration and communal harmony, eradicating evils of and impartiality in the programming untouchability, ignorance and poverty and ensuring women's and children's welfare. The objectivity and impartially in the programming of the official media is the cornerstone of their functioning. Reliance is placed upon facts; sensationalism is avoided at all costs.

Education—both formal and non-formal and awareness of the rich cultural heritage of the country forms an important segment of the programmes mounted by the Government through its various media. Be it the medium of Radio or Television or other forms of communication, emphasis is laid on creating an informed, educated and enlightened citizenry. The Government, in its future plans for the development of media, will continue to aim at further strengthening the media base for attainment of these objectives.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Madam Deputy Chairman, the Minister, in the first part of his statement has outlined the objectives of the official media. As far as the objectives on paper are concerned, they are very laudable and there is no quarrel with him. Even his annual report for 1986-87 and every year, in his annual report, the first para contains more or less the repetition of the same objectives. But, Madam, I would like to know how far the official media are able to achieve these objectives and I must say with regret that the official media has more or less failed to achieve these objectives. This is not my opinion or the opinion of a Member from the Opposition party but it is the universally expressed opinion of several expert Committees, appointed by the Government of India itself, whether it is the Joshi Committee, the Media Advisory Committee or the Namedia Committee or any other Committee which has earlier gone into this aspect.

There is a general feeling among the people of this country also that the official media, instead of trying to achieve the objectives set for itself, has become the mouthpiece of the ruling party and its only objective appears to be the furtherance of the interest of the ruling party and the projection of the image of its leader and that becomes the sole objective of the official media and in the process, the official media is gradually losing its credibility and prominence and whenever there is a crisis and when people want authentic news, we know to which radio and to which media they turn to. I need not elaborate on that, but it is a fact.

There is a general feeling that the importance given to the development activities, as a contrast to the prominence given to the ministerial statements and their activities, in the official media is far less and disproportionate and the standard of programmes telecast or broadcast by the official media is not upto the mark and there is lack of professionalism in the programmes put out by the official media.

I will now come to the most important medium, the Doordarshan because out of Rs. 1471 crores which the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has been allotted in the Seventh Plan for the various media, Rs. 700 crores go to Doordarshan alone. During these 27 years since the Doordarshan has made its appearance in this country, it covers through roughly five million sets—if you take seven people for a set, leaving the community sets—about 35 million people in a population of 80

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crores. Of course, we have an ambitious plan of covering 70 per cent of the population shortly and I hope, we will be able to achieve that objective. But what the various working groups on software plan for Doordarshan have said? The Joshi Committee in its report submitted in April, 1984, the Media Advisory Committee in its report of December 1985 and the Namedia Report submitted in July 1986 have made several valuable and topical recommendations. I would only ask the Minister how many recommendations which have already been accepted by the Government and placed in the Parliament have been implemented and how many of them have not been accepted so far and what are the reasons therefor.

The most important observation which I am constrained to make is our Doordarshan, as it stands today, has become elitist and mostly serve the urban audiences, urban viewers and the Joshi Committee itself said, "Doordarshan is still a faceless medium and it is still to present an Indian face." That is the observation made by the Committee and it remains so even today In spite of the community sets put here and there and some private sets put in the rural areas. The Doordarshan programmes are directed for the urban audiences and cater to their tastes. One aspect which has received very adverse criticism by various Committees and the people also is that commercialism is overtaking the Doordarshan day by day. Since the advertisements started on Doordarshan in 1977, there is too much stress on increasing the income. Today, I think, they are getting about Rs. 80 crores through advertisements revenue and they proudly say, this year it will go to Rs. 100 crores and next year, it will go to Rs. 200 crores as if it is a business concern and they would like to go on increasing the amount. The major complaint against the advertisements is, they project elitist habits and mentality and in the rural areas and in the lower middle-class and the ordinary people, they promote a sort of inferiority complex because most of these things which are advertised, which are displayed in these advertisements are not within the reach of the common man or the middle-class man. The Joshi Committee and the Media Advisory Committee have commented like this. The Media Advisory Committee has said: "It points out the *dangers of an organization giving* undue importance to the income from commercial broadcast. The history of sound broadcasting and television is full of examples of well-meaning commercial systems which aimed at raising adequate funds for the creation of better programmes and they invariably ended up as the tools of commercialism. The Joshi Committee has drawn attention to this experience and calls upon Doordarshan to be aware of the pit-falls. Television is an expensive medium and in a country like India, advertising on television and of sponsored programmes cannot be totally dispensed with. But advertising and sponsored programmes should neither dilute the social objectives of television nor be so presented as to project consumerism with all its social consequences. Advertising should not add to frustration and social tensions..." and so on and so forth.

This is the comment of the Joshi Committee and the Media Advisory Commmittee. The previous Minister, Ajit Panja's predecessor, Mr. Gadgil, made an assurance in Parliament and outside that the overall time of Doordarshan for sponsored programmes will not be allowed to ex-

ceed 11 per cent of the total time and the time for advertisements will not be allowed to exceed 5 per cent. I want to know from the present Minister whether he is honouring that commitment and that assurance and what he is doing about it. Also, I am thinking aloud, I do not know whether it is possible, just as we have on radio a separate entertainment wave length, the Vividh Bharati, whether you could have a separate channel for commercial advertisements, the elitist programmes, the urban-oriented programmes, etc. and have an exclusive channel for the other general programmes for family audiences, for programmes of real interest to the majority of the people of this country. Probably then there will be no clash of interests between the two audiences. Those who want to see one kind of programme can always switch on that channel and those who want to view the general programme can have it on the other channel. You are already having two channels in Delhi and Bombay and you are going to have one more channel in Calcutta and Madras shortly. So, instead of having mixed-up programmes in these two channels, I want to know whether you can exclusively allot one channel for this type of general programmes of interest to the majority of ordinary Indians and the other channel for other programmes. You may consider that also.

Similarly, all the Committees have recommended that local production facilities must be increased And that has not been done. Very few studios have come up so far and as a result we find only programmes produced mostly in Delhi and Bombay being presented on the national hook-up and talent in other centres is not being tapped and is not being given an opportunity. Even in the commercial hook-up also the same thing is happening. Only one or two centres are exploiting the entire potential. Other centres are not able to project themselves. Therefore, that also has to be seen and wherever studios have been planned, they must be completed quickly. For example, the Hyderabad studio has to come up but it is not coming up. A studio has been planned for Vijayawada. It has not come up so far. I do not know what the reasons are.

One important suggestion which was made by Joshi Committee and which the Government also accepted, is linking up the major kendras with the low power transmitters. You have made a beginning with Bombay and Hyderabad and I am very happy that you have given Hyderabad this facility. It is very essential. There is no point in confining Doordarshan to metropolitan cities and their surrounding areas. Unless these programmes are relayed all over the States, the regional programmes lose their importance; they have no relevance. Regional programmes are specifically meant for the local audiences. Unless you reach to the rural areas, there is no purpose in having those regional programmes in the various centres. Therefore, you must quickly expand this facility to more centres and see that the entire country is covered by this as quickly as possible.

Another thing is about community receivers. In providing community sets not much progress is being made of the six lakh villages I do not know how many villages the various State Governments and the Central Government have covered. If your aim is to cover 70 per cent of the audiences shortly, I do not know how you will do it unless you have community sets. The total estimated cost of the community sets is about Rs. 250 crores, apart from

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maintenance, electricity charges, etc. I think that much you can afford or you can take the assistance of some international organisation which may probably be interested in helping, like the UNESCO or any such organisation; they may be interested in this kind of a thing. You can tap them.

Then I come to regional programmes. Very little time is given to regional programmes. You have given them only from 6.30 to 8.40 P.M. And that also is being taken away in between for various programmes. I suggest that the time allotted to regional programmes should be increased. I do not know why you cannot start it from 5.30 or before 6'O clock. What is the difficulty? You do not need a satellite for that. It is a local arrangement. Why can it not be done? I would like the Minister to tell us why the time for regional, local programmes cannot be increased. And in all these regional programmes emphasis, prominence, should be given to local developments. We often find even in regional news all the national news being included and very little is being given of what is happening in those particular States. What for is the regional news? Except a translation of national news there is nothing regional about it. Therefore, more coverage should be given to things happening in the particular State; otherwise, people will have no interest in regional programmes and they will not have any sense of participation.

Then there should be more relay centres. Several centres have not been coverd so far by T.V. I think a little less than or exactly 200 relay centres are there now. Even in that there are imbalances. When you compare the situation in various States we find in a State like Maharashtra—I do not grudge it—they have 23 HPT and LPT centres whereas a big State like U.P. has only 25, another big State, Tamil Nadu, has only 8. I do not know what rationale is behind this, why there are such imbalances between various States. The Minister should explain what are the criteria that are followed in opening relay centres. In Andhra also, for example, there are two important industrial centres—Ramagundam and Kothagudem—and at both places they want relay centres. And the Ministry wanted Rs. 25 lakhs to be deposited. I do no know what the policy is, why only at these two particular centres, the local people are asked to pay Rs. 25 lakhs for the transmitters and why it is not insisted upon elsewhere. I want to know that. The quality of reception at several places is not up to the mark. I wrote to the Minister several times. In Visakhapatnam and Vijayawara shadow zones are still continuing and programmes are below standard. Therefore, I would like the Minister to see to that also.

The next point I come to is this. The Minister claimed in his statement, "All the media units and organisations of the Ministry maintain close liaison with the State Governments and other official agencies engaged in mass communication." There cannot be a greater falsehood than this. There is absolutely no coordination between the Government of India media and the State Governments. I dare say that and I stand by my statement. If the Minister says that there is coordination, I would ask him through what channels and how it is being done. There is absolutely no coordination. It looks as if they are living in different islands; it looks as if Doordarshan and All India Radio people are living in an island in the State capitals and

other centres; they do not keep any coordination with the State Governments. Particularly in the non-Congress I States they do not bother at all for the State Governments. They do not bother to project the activities of the State Governments, even good activities. Several times they refuse to attend the functions. They do not cover functions. They are so much afraid of the local Congress people. I often find it in my State, Andhra Pradesh; the local TV Director is more afraid of the local Congressmen than his own Minister. If he projects the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, probably he thinks he will be pulled up by somebody. That fear is there.

I will come to that later and I will give one or two instances. Therefore, I feel that there must be a separate channel. This has more than once been repeated and demanded by the Chief Ministers themselves. There must be a separate channel for the States. If you cannot do justice to the State Governments and the States' requirements, at least you must give a separate channel so that they can look after themselves.

Now, I come to the most important aspect and that is presentation of the news by the Doordarshan. As I mentioned earlier, your news has no credibility at all. What you give in your news bulletins is absolutely off the track and nobody takes it seriously. That is why I tell you that if anybody wants any information about some happening, they switch on to the BBC. Even Pakistani radio is believed rather than your AIR. There is something that is there and that is lack of credibility. Unless you rectify that, I do not think that people will trust you. The Joshi Committee itself suggested that there should be a total reorientation in broadcasting news and the Committee gave many suggestions. The media Advisory Committee gave some guidelines in the name, "News Policy for the Broadcast Media". What happened to that? The guidelines were placed in Parliament. I do not want to read out those guidelines now. But the Minister made a statement in Parliament and he read out all those guidelines. Why are they not being followed by the media, whether it is AIR or Doordarshan Why are they giving a short shrift to these guidelines and why are those guidelines not being observed? On the TV, you show some firing in Sri Lanka or a pro-Bhutto demonstration or an anti-Zia demonstration in Pakistan. You buy these visuals and you show them on your TV. But the Boat Club demonstration you do not show. What credibility do you have? What credibility does the Doordarshan have? Therefore unless you establish some credibility, nobody would take you seriously.

Then, I come to the question of our exposure of the Prime Minister. He himself says, " I do not want it.". He also says that he warned them more than once. He warned the Minister, your predecessor. He has said "I pulled him up.". He said it openly, "I pulled up the Minister." I do not know whether he lost his job only because of that; I do not know. But that is still being continued and they are doing the same thing and this is very regrettable. I say, ou show the Prime Minister. Whenever the Prime Minister participates in any function, it becomes a news, in fact. But instead of showing the Prime Minister only, why don't you show that project or that place also which is being attended by him? That is being ignored and only his personality is being projected. Even his holidaying is being shown on the TV; Is it wise using the official media like this? Do you think that by this you can create confidence among the people? You must have some professionals to do this..... (*Time bell rings*)... The media Committee itself has suggested this. The Central Information Service people will not be able to do it because they are afraid of the lost of their career and their future because they cannot dis please you. They are always

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afraid that if they give certain things in the news, that will affect their career and promotion and they may be transferred also. You can take on contract good journalists and professional people and they can do justice to the news. Then only your news will have some news value. There are things like floods and things like drought. There is a drought situation in Karnataka, there are floods in Andhra Pradesh, and normally you do not take these things into account at all. Such serious and devastating things are happening and you do not bother to show them on the TV. But if the Prime Minister visits the affected areas and pats some aged woman somewhere, that becomes a news item for you. This is where the media is being misused and that is why I particularly wanted to point this out.

Then, as regards the films also, you must have more regional language films on the national hook-up so that the people know the cultures to other people, so that the people of one area can understand the cultures of the people of the other areas, and you can show the films with subtitles and summaries. You must project more films from other areas, not Hindi films alone, on the national hook-up. So, other language films also should be shown. Once in a while you show some regional language films and you mutilate them. Once you showed a regional language film and you mutilated it. On the 23rd March, 1986, you showed the film, "Saptapadi", a Telugu film dealing with untouchability. I myself saw that picture and it was completely mutilated, left and right, and nobody could understand anything and nobody could understand what the film was about. I protested and I wrote a latter to you also. This is how it is being treated

Then I come to one more important point because today's Calling Attention Motion is on how objectively the media is being used. I would like to give only two or three instances before I close and I would like to tell you how 'objectively' you are using these media. I am sorry to say this. I will give some illustrations how these things are happening. We had a meeting of 13 political parties in Hyderabad last year. Your local Doordadshan Director was requested to cover the meeting in which four Chief Ministers were present. It was not covered. Also, I tell you, before the Budget session we had a meeting of our parliamentary party in Hyderabad with Party president presiding and we issued a Press Note; I held a Press Conference and briefed the Press about what were the subjects that we were going to take up in Parliament. Our party is the largest party in Parliament, particularly in Lok Sabha. Not a line came on the Doordarshan and All India Radio. When I protested to you, you said that the news is divided between regional and national. When did the Parliament become regional and Parliament's activities become regional? Simply because the meeting was held in Hyderabad, it becomes regional. I do not know what type of argument it is.

And even about projecting the Chief Minister, I will tell you. I made an analysis. Last month, in March 1987, in the news bulletins of local Hyderabad Doordarshan, in the local news, there were 80 visuals shown, and only two showed the Chief Minister, and that also one was film festival awards and the other was the handicrafts exhibition opening. Nothing else. And the State Governor was shown 15 times. And you want to have the cooperation of non-Congress Governments this way? Is this the way of preaching national integration and unity? Once a cricket match was there in Hyderabad. Sunil Gavaskar was honoured by our Chief Minister. He gave him a Rs. 25000 cheque and a presentation. What did the TV show? What did you show? You showed Sunil Gavaskar and the model or some-

thing and the hand of the Chief Minister.' We could understand it was N.T.R. because of the saffron clothes, because of the full-length safforn Kurta... (*Interruptions*) Is this the way the Doordarshan should function? This is the funny way in which your media is working. I will give you conclude, because they are all hilarous. Since I have spoken so seriously, you must have some fun also. One picture was there 'Shri Krishna Satya' produced 14 years ago in which Mr. N. T. Rama Rao was the hero and our colleague in this House, Miss Jayalalitha, was the heroine. She belongs to an ally of your party, AIDMK. This old film was shown again from 13th February, 1987 and one song from that was sought to be shown on the TV, on payment. There is the 'Chitra Lahiri' programme, a local programme, at the moment. The distributors wanted that. The TV Director said: No, Mandal elections will come in two months; I cannot show NTR on the TV at this stage; this is political. The picture was produced 14 years ago, a mythological film, nothing to do with politics. There was no politics in the film. And the Doordarshan says openly that it is political, we cannot show NTR on the TV. Do you tolerate this kind of thing? Is it your personal property? Is it your grandfather's property that you can use it as you like? These are national media which have to be shared by everybody. We have the right to demand that. You cannot use it as you like. Have your own private TVs and Radios if you want we do not mind it. But these are national media. You cannot misuse them like that. You cannot deny us these legitimate opportunities.

Another thing... (*Time bell rings*) I am finishing.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You were given 15 minutes; you have spoken for thirty minutes.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: I will take five minutes more. Thank you very much. You are very indulgent. I am grateful to you.

Madam this Government sometimes acts very democratically. I appreciate Mr. Panja. If you follow it everywhere I will be happy. The Congress Party in our State held demonstrations against our Government at three or four centres. And TV teams were sent to cover the demonstration. somewhere there were 100 people somewhere 50 people, somewhere 200 people and somewhere 300 people. They showed the close-ups of the same crowds twice and thrice. They sent a team to Vijayawada. The crowd was around 25,000. I say so becuse I was there myself, the next day and verified. The T.V. announced that three lakh people had attended the rally. The ground can hold only one lakh people. Half the ground was occupied by a Christian conference. I never saw the T.V. giving the estimates of the crowd. People were laughing. Three lakhs in this ground!

There is another funny thing. A bye-election was held in the Secunderabad parliamentary constituency on 23rd of March and the counting should have taken place on 24th March. It could not take place because there was repolling in one or two booths. The counting actually took place on 25th March. At 5.00 P.M. on March, 24 they were showing the special news bulletin on State election. They said that the Congress Party candidate was leading in Secunderabad parilamentary constituency where the counting had not started at all. What is the credibility of this Government and this media? This is how things are happening. I do not want to elaborate. I have got a number of things to tell. We are all treated like that. You take our budget reactions and then you cut them. It happened during the last budget. Only one man came on the T.V. All the other people were cut because we had

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said certain things against the Government.

Lastly, take this radio. Your objective is to cover 97.5 per cent of the population by the Seventh Plan end. But you are giving stepmotherly treatment to radio. All your concentration is on the T.V. Radio is more popular in the rural areas. Whether you take the content or the equipment or the staff, whatever you take, radio is being treated as a step-child. You must not do it. Similarly, take your film media and the information media. They are also being ignored. Even the money allotted to them is very meagre and you are not spending even that meagre amount.

Therefore, there is only one solution. That is what the Verghese Committee has recommended. You make all these media into an autonomous corporation. Meanwhile, you can have the National Media Advisory Committee. You can form this committee with an eminent person as the Chairman and a few as members of the committee. You can give them all powers. Give the media a professional touch. Then there is a suggestion about the formation of a National Doordarshan Council also. There is a suggestion by the Joshi Committee to have an ombudsman to hear complaints against the media like the Press Council. If a newspaper publishes a wrong thing, we can complain to the Press Council. Why can't there be a person who can hear complaints against the Govt. media, instead of our airing those complaints here? He can hear complaints against the media.

In addition, you must also have proper training for your staff and your producers. That is not being done. The payments made to the artistes are very meagre. In the National Programme of Music and Dance, there is favouritism and corruption. The same people are being repeated. You don't give a chance to the new people. The same people are there because they are known to the producers and programme executives. You should rectify these things if you want the media to function effectively. I want correct answers from the Minister when he replies to the discussion today. Madam, I am sorry for taking a long time.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would like to request the hon. Members to restrict their speeches to 10 minutes only. If you go on speaking in spite of my ringing the bell, then it will not be possible to finish it wthin the time limit.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Madam, in my opinion, you should have called the attention of the Minister to the constant abuse of State controlled media instead of putting the words like this.

AN. HON. MEMBER: You have also put it.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The attention should have been called to the constant abuse of the State media by those who control it.

Madam, let me begin by saying that Doordarshan has a nickname in West Bengal. In West Bengal it is called Rajiv Darshan. I do not know how far it is true. But that is the nickname given by the illiterate peasants of West Bengal nowadays. Madam, the role of the State media has to be viewed in the way in which it performs. In a system where there are more than one party which we call the multiple party system, a heavily loaded State owned media is dangerous because it strikes hard at the roots of the democratic system to the extent democracy is left in our country. In my opinion radio and television constitute the biggest propaganda machine for the party that rules for the man who rules the party. I do not know where the policies are being shaped. Is it in the Ministry of Broadcasting or in the AICC Secretariat? Madam, this country is predominantly a rural country. Let the

Minister explain to what extent rural India is reflected on the television screen. The problem of tardy implementation of land reforms, the question of non-payment of minimum wage to the agricultural workers, the constantly declining price of agricultural produce do not find any place in the so-called discussion you hold, on a number of occasions either in the national network or in the regional network. It is because your programme is not only elitist but your culture is also five-star culture. It is because you cater to the needs of the affluent urban class, it is because you are having, in my opionion, vulgar consumerism. It is bound to be because a substantial portion of your income is derived from the monopoly concerns. 76 per cent of your inome is derived from the advertisements given by the Mafatlals, the Reliance, the Tatas and the Dalmias. And four or five concerns monopolise the television programme in our country. Therefore, in a situation like this, your programme is bound to be elitist. Madam, being a woman yourself, you just consider whether the Indian TV needs a half-clad young woman having sharp features to be shown on the national network in order to promote the sales of a particular brand of tooth paste: Being a woman, kindly consider whether a woman has to embrace a man in order to increase the sales of a particular scooter in our country. (*Interruption*) Woman had always been a commodity in the capitalist market. I thought India should have been different. But the Indian television and the advertising programmes reflect very crudely that the woman's body with explosive exposure is being used or allowed to be used so that the coffers of the multinationals can be filled, I draw your attention. Madam Chairperson, to the latest feather in the cap of our Information Minister. His midnight adventure on prolonged kissing and explosive bedroom scene might have a little artistic value, but in my opinion it is not consistent with the Indian culture: I am a Communist and not a conservatist, but I am inclined to say that the pornographic films in the name of artistic creation is in way skilfully having its impact on the morale of the younger generation. Therefore, I charge the Government of selling exposed films, pornographic films, in the name of showing adult films. I call upon the Minister to particularly put an end to this mad adventure.

Madam, their drive against narcotics is really a campaign for narcotics, because the people would come to know where they can buy narcotics. Your form of campaign against narcotics is defeating the purpose for which the campaign is being built.

I do not quarrel, Madam, that the Prime Minister has to be shown on the television. I do not grudge that. But what I protest is the desperate disproportionate representation of the Prime Minister on the television and over the radio Therefore, the point is that a personality cult is sought

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to be built and the historical experience of the world has shown that building up of personality cults is harmful for the nation, at least it is not consistent with the Indian culture.

Coming to West Bengal, Madam Chairperson, let me cite certain instances, maybe inconvenient for the Minister who presides over the administration. It is a matter of shame that I have to level charges against a Minister who comes from my own State. Just magine what is the level of disproportionate discrimination, not only discrimination, but disproportionate discrimination, meted out to our national leaders. Comrade Jyoti Basu was not allowed to appear over television to make an appeal to the electorate of West Bengal, asking them to maintain peace; that was not allowed beacuse he was a candidate for the CPI (M) and the Left Front. But I hope Mr. Ajit Panja knows Mr. Sadhan Pande, who is very close to him, and he knows Mr. Sushamal Basu, both these people figured prominently, both of them were Congress candidates, in the newsreels of television.

'Meet the Press' programme of Comrade Jyoti Basu was ignored by the Calcutta Station of Doordarshan because election was near at hand. But Meet the Press programme of Priya Ranjan Das Munishi was prominently displayed.

Madam, the Minister of Secondary Education was not allowed to put across an appeal to the guardians because the examination had to be postponed under a special situation, because the question papers were stolen by the rebellious GNLF groups and volunteers in Darjeeling. He was not allowed to make a statement. But the condemnation of Priya Ranjan Das Munshi against the postponement of the examination was telecast in a prominent way. This is how...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN. Please conclude at 1.30 p.m. Your ten minutes will be over at 1.30. You have two more minutes to go.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, no person can open the innings. A batsman can open but there has to be a partener. Therefore, if you have allowed 30 minutes to the opening batsman, you should not allow only ten minutes to the person who has partnered nim. (*Interruption*).

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your ten minutes will be over at 1.30 P.M.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam., the Minister wants us to go on. He wants information so that he can taken action.

SHRI AJIT PANJA: Because I know Mr. Das Gupta will never stop.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, he is also hungry. He will stop at 1.30 P.M.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: This is a reflection on the Chair.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, we want to know whether we are adjourning for lunch or continuing. If so, at what time?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We will adjourn for lunch at 1.30.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, please allow me to continue after lunch. I will take just five minutes more.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Your ten minutes will be over at 1.30, please do not waste your time:

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, there are imporant specific suggestions. I will continue after lunch and will take just five minutes. This is my appeal to you. What is the use of continuing in a useless way because people are hungry.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is very difficult for me to go on like this. Everybody wants more time, wants to exceed the time given to him. Here a note has been left: Advise the Members to restrict their speeches. The note is here on my table. Therefore, please conclude now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN (West Bengal): The Minister wants to hear him.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Let me oblige the Minister with the expectation that this discussion will find a place in the national network. Let me oblige the Minister. Anyway, the point is . . .

SHRI AJIT PANJA: I can assure the Member that his name would be taken.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I thank the Minister for the generosity.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY (Tamil Nadu): It is a matter of right.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I thank him for the generosity because he happens to be the owner of the administration.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You have made your point. Please conclude now.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, the point is, when Congress (I) organises a *gherao* in Calcutta to boost the morale of he party before the elections they are able to mobilise several thousands people. the whole episode is reflected on the television screen. I would ask the hon. Minister specifically, if the left parties or the opposition organise a *gherao* at some Minister's house in Delhi, will that be telecast tomorrow? Or, if we organise a demonstration tomorrow on the Bofors issue in front of the Prime Minister's house, are you going to telecast that? Therefore, it is a question of political discrimination. When Congress (I) organises a programme, it is given publicity. But when the other parties organise a programmes, national parties organise a programme, it is not given publicity.

Madam, the hon. Minister has been speaking of secularism. In his statement, he has spoken of secularism and national unity. Let me remind him that it is the telecast by the Doordarshan which resulted in the flaring up of communal passion in U.P. In the Ram Janma Bhoomi issue, when the court gave the decision throwing open the temple to the Hindus for pujas, the next evening, the television net work showed the pujas. Immediately, the feelings of the minority community were hurt and communal passion flared up. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he knows about it, whether he will order and enquiry and whether he will punish the person. I submit, Madam there is, in some cases, a religious sting in the programme. It is not always secular. There is a religious sting in the programme and the religious

[Shri Gurudas Das Gupta]

tinge is particularly with the religion of the majority community of our country.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Please conclude.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Madam, I do not subscribe to the view that it should be converted into an independent corporation. It should be in the hands of the Central Government. But there should be a consensus among the national parties. The national parties should come to an agreement or there should be specific guidelines as to in what way it should be run.

Secondly, the State Governments must have a hand in it. The Calcutta Doordarshan cannot be allowed to hold to ransom the mass network, the mass media, the way it likes. They have been given to understand that they can care a pig for Mr. Jyoti Basu if they can keep the Congress leaders on the right side. This notion of the bureaucrats who are holding on to Calcutta Doordarshan should be given a go-by.

Thirdly, Madam, there should be an advisory committee and the advisory committee should consist not only people belonging to his side, not only people belonging to his own group in the party, but it should consist of people who know the subject. Men of letters, men of literature, men of culture, eminent artists including political leaders should be there so that something concrete and creative can emerge out of this. I believe, the mass media can become the centre of a biggest creative mass movement in the country's culture and that can be the real counterblast to the western culture. But in this respect too, the Ministry is wanting because it would like to run it as the propaganda machine or the Congress (I) instead of using it for the national benefit and purpose. Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House is now adjourned for lunch and will meet again at 2.30 P.M.

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty-five minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at thirty-two minutes past two of the clock, the Vice-Chairman (Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal) in the Chair.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Re. drawal of Advance from the Contingency Fund of India for meeting the requirement of Funds for the Commission of Inquiry on Fairfax Group Inc.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, as the Hon'ble Members are aware, a Commission of Inquiry consisting of Shri Justice M. P. Thakkar and Shri Justice S. Natarajan, Chairman and Member respectively of the Commission has been set up by Government of India on 6-4-1987 under the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1952 (60 of 1952) to inquire into the events and circumstances leading to the arrangements entered into with the Fairfax Group Inc. of USA. The terms of reference of this Commission of Inquiry is indicated in the Notification regarding appointment of this Commission which was published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary dated 6-4-1987, a copy of which was laid on the Table of the House on 15.4.1987.

This Commission of Inquiry will be serviced by the Department of Eco-